

23rd December, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR : Charles W. Sampey
FROM :
SUBJECT : Conversations With National Air &
Space Museum Officials on Donation
of U-2 to the Museum

STAT

On Monday, 14th December, in company with Mr. , I visited the office of Mr. Walter J. Boyne, the Assistant Director of the Museum. He was joined by Mr. Donald S. Lopez, Chairman, Department of Aeronautics, also at the Museum, to discuss the possibility of turning a U-2 over to them for display.

STAT
SIAI

Both Messrs. Boyne and Lopez were extremely receptive to the plan, saying that the Museum had been interested for years in obtaining a U-2 for permanent display. A verbal request for a U-2 had been made to the Air Force some time ago by the then-Assistant Director, (Astronaut) Michael Collins. He had been told at that time that classification would make this unlikely, and so no further attempt had been made.

I explained to them that one of the original U-2s was now in dead storage at the LAC facility at Palmdale, CA., and that there was no prospective requirement for its services. It was stored in either 1977 or 1978 and is wholly intact. I told them that B Cameras and Tracker Cameras were also available from storage at Warner-Robbins AFB in Georgia, and the plan was to make one each of these available to go with the aircraft.

I added that I had been in close touch with Kelly Johnson on this matter, and that Kelly had indicated that he would rework the aircraft and make it suitable for display, and that these costs would be borne by Lockheed as soon as he was told when to proceed. Boyne said that the initial plan would be to display the aircraft at the Museum's facility at Silver Hill, Maryland, indoors along with a number of other historical aircraft. As soon as plans could be made, they would want to display the bird in the Main Hall of the Museum downtown. The Silver Hill annex is open to the public three days a week.

Boyne asked that he be notified as soon as Admiral Inman had reacted to the proposal, at which point he would have a letter, formally requesting donation of the aircraft, written for the signature of the Museum's Director to the Admiral. We now await further direction from DDCI.

STAT

cc:

STAT

23rd December, 1981

Mr. Clarence L. Johnson, Senior Advisor
Lockheed Corporation
P.O.Box 551
Burbank
California 91520

Dear Kelly:

I didn't want you to think that somehow I had forgotten you after our last conversation about installing a U-2, specifically, Article 347, in the National Air & Space Museum. Quite frankly, we are now awaiting on guidance from Admiral Inman as to the next step.

You will see from the enclosed that I have managed to take matters a bit farther, at least as far as the Air & Space people are concerned. They are delighted with the idea as you can see, but first we have to go through a Washington rain dance of exchanging letters, blowing in each other's ears and all that stuff. I must admit to a sense of frustration at the pace of business I have observed since coming back to the fold. Right now, with Christmas just down the pike, you could fire a cannon through the parking lots and not hurt anybody! And it will be that way until 4th January I am told. I used to think myself fortunate to be at home for Christmas and New Year's Day, but now the place folds about 20th December for all practical purposes. Not much of a sense of urgency...

I spoke with Leo Geary after my last chat with you, and enlisted his support should we need anyone to persuade the Air Force of the wisdom of the move of the bird. He had just concluded his stay in HNL and seemed in fine fettle. Said he would like nothing better than to take on "Caspar and friends" as he put it. He added that he thought he would start campaigning to get his annuity reduced, since he say no reason why he should get \$400 a month more than a four star general on active duty!!

Also, I understand that recently Inman has been seized pretty much with "the Polish problem," which reduces the amount of time and thought he can give to much lower priority matters like planes in museums. I may have mentioned that the old U-2 gang at NASA/Ames are ready to draw straws to see who gets to fly 347 back to Andrews. Incidentally, Lopez indicated that the Museum would welcome the availability at this end of wing and fuselage dollies to ground handle the bird after arrival and subsequent partial disassembly.

Hope you and Nancy have a Happy Christmas and New Year.
Warmest regards,

Scanned by

STAT